

The message from the electorate is simple: Live within your means.

The reason we're facing a potential government shutdown is simple: No budget for 2011. And Democrats don't see our spending issues with the same degree of urgency as we do.

I said it just a few days ago on this same floor, and it's worth repeating. We have kicked this can down the road so long, so often and so far, that America and this Congress has a chronic case of turf toe.

Message to America: If you want to remove uncertainty and create jobs, fix the balance sheet. Cut spending. It's as simple as that.

This Republican-led House has done its job. We've attempted time and time again to fund government in a responsible way, prevent a government shutdown, and restore fiscal integrity. I join my colleagues in urging the Senate to act and to act now so that we can turn our attention to the far more important and substantive work that lies ahead.

#### MASSIVE PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday on the floor of the House, STENY HOYER, Minority Whip, offered the Republicans the time, by unanimous consent, to work out the details in terms of getting the numbers right because, regardless of the pontification, it's very clear that urgent negotiations have gone forward, and the difference between the two parties is very small. This could be worked out in a day or two.

But this offer was rejected because our Republican friends are no longer interested in the money. It's about the ideological agenda, the riders, the change to policy for EPA, or dictating their ideology on the people in the District of Columbia, for instance.

It is also about a much larger agenda going forward. I spent most of Wednesday listening to the Republican budget road map that is on its way to the floor of the House. It is so extreme that before the election, when my good friend, PAUL RYAN, unveiled it, very few Republicans would sign on. They knew that in the heat of an election, if people knew what Republicans had in store, they wouldn't get elected. So they were counseled, stay away.

Well, it's unveiled now. The election is held and this agenda is back with a vengeance.

I invite any American to look at independent appraisals of what's in it. There is nothing new or reforming about vouchers for health insurance companies or block granting Medicare to the States. Under this proposal, total health care costs are going to go up. But the cost to the government of the voucher is going to go down. And

230 million Americans, 55 and under, are going to pick up the tab.

Oh, and yes, they're going to keep, for 80 million Americans, Medicare that's going to be limping on in its current form. In 2050 there will be 8 million people still covered.

There are massive cuts, but not for defense. That's more or less off limits. There's talk of reform, but in the area of reform where I have worked with PAUL RYAN for years, agriculture, no. We're going to leave that until reauthorization takes place.

Health care for the poor is on the chopping block. They are going to block grant aid to the States so that it can be reduced over time. Bear in mind that the cost per person for Medicaid is the lowest in this country, at a time when private health insurance premiums have doubled in the last 10 years, and overall private health care spending has gone up faster than government health care spending.

Now, in these troubled times, we should be looking at reform. In the Health Care Reform Act passed last session, we have an opportunity to actually change those health care cost curves. Every significant advance to restrain accelerated health care costs are embedded in that legislation. But rather than accelerating it, our friends want to delay it.

I strongly urge the American public to take the time to look at what's in this proposal because that's what's coming down the line, and not be distracted by the shutdown that Republicans are insisting upon.

□ 1020

#### GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to add my voice to the growing number of Members not only here in this body but also in the Senate that are calling on Senator REID to take action.

Last week, on Wednesday, 30 freshmen and myself wrote a letter imploring Senator REID to pass a long-term continuing resolution so that we could address the bigger issue of our fiscal year 12 budget. We said simply: We the undersigned call on you and the Senate to pass a long-term continuing resolution, a resolution that hears the calls of the American people and makes reasonable, responsible spending cuts. We have received nothing from the Senate except denials of the dire straits of our Nation's fiscal health.

Mr. REID, we are letting you know that we will rally on the Senate steps every day until you pass a long-term continuing resolution.

And that's exactly what we've done every day for the past week. In fact, today will be the 8th day, in just a few minutes, that we step over to the Sen-

ate steps and call on him once again to be a leader.

On Wednesday of this week, we sent another letter asking Senator REID, if he wasn't willing to lead, to step down and allow someone in who would lead. Ninety Members signed that, and we were joined by Members of the Senate in that call asking Mr. REID, simply: Your lack of action and absence of leadership is irresponsible.

Let's take a look at the costs that we face as we are literally hours away from a government shutdown. We spend \$69 billion a week in spending, of which \$27 billion is borrowed. We are asking for \$61 billion in cuts—2 percent. Any small business that I know of in this economy, if you ask them can you cut 5 percent out of your budget and the other option is closing the doors, what do you think they're going to do? They're going to find the 5 percent and stay open, keep the doors open and stay in business. That's all we're asking at this point, a small down payment for the bigger picture that's coming up in fiscal year 2012.

Not to mention our troops. I got a call this morning from a young sergeant with four children, serving in a National Guard unit in my district that's being deployed in just weeks. And he said, Congressman CRAWFORD, we are frustrated. We're angry. We're upset. What's going to happen to my family as I go to Afghanistan and they rely on my paycheck? And yet the Senate says, no, we're not interested in funding the troops for the balance of this year.

Yesterday, this body took responsible action in funding the troops for the balance of this year and funding our government for another week until we could address the bigger picture, the balance of fiscal year 2011. It is time for Senator REID to lead, as his title suggests. We passed a bill to fund the government. We're asking for leadership on the Senate side.

Mr. REID, please pass a bill.

#### THE REPUBLICAN ROAD TO RUIN BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, the Republican road-to-ruin budget, if enacted, will end Medicare. It will end the program that 46 million seniors and disabled individuals depend upon for their health care. This gross injustice is made immeasurably more egregious and offensive by the fact that this is being done not to balance the budget, but to expand and permanently guarantee even bigger tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and to give new tax breaks to some of the world's most profitable companies.

Rather than the path to prosperity, this budget is more like the road-to-ruin, a road paved in gold with lavish handouts for special interests, paid for and built with dollars from senior citizens who will see their hard-earned